

U.S. Patent Application Serial No.: 09/899,267  
Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. §1.111 dated December 20, 2004  
Response to the Office Action of September 22, 2004

**REMARKS**

Claims 1 – 13 were allowed. Claim 15 was merely objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claim 14. By this Amendment, claim 14 was canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claim 15 was rewritten into independent form. Therefore, the prior art rejection of claim 14 is now moot, and only allowable claims 1 – 13 and 15 remain pending in the present application. Accordingly, the present application is now in condition for allowance. An early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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